

NMA Annual Re-Dedication Parade 2016

The annual service at the RAF Police Memorial took place (as it does every year) on 23 June, at the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA) near Lichfield. The weather was fair and conditions underfoot reasonably firm. The other basic factor to mention is that the buildings in the NMA all appear to be under reconstruction, redevelopment or newly built. This is because the whole of the administrative site is being enlarged to meet the ever rising numbers of people visiting the many memorials.

So the "meet and greet" area was even more crowded than usual, as approaching 150 assorted bodies made a lot of mainly happy sounds.

All the news was not good, as firstly the new Provost Marshal and our Vice President (Group Captain S R (Steve) Horne MA RAF) was absent on sick leave; he had a serious motor cycle accident several years ago and occasionally he suffers the effects. Secondly, the Parade Warrant Officer (WO Dale Woolman-Lane MBE RAF) was also off sick. Thirdly, the Association National Standard Bearer (Nigel Lacey) was unable to attend.

As ever, the Association National Parade Marshal, Bill Veazey MBE sorted us into a real looking flight of almost able bodied men! We were led by Brian Flinn carrying the National Standard (as a result the standard of the Wiltshire Branch could not be paraded). Four Branch Standards followed and just behind and in front of our marching contingent was our new(ish) Association National Chairman, Mr David Budd. In all there were some 30 members marching.

In front of the Association contingent, was a small flight of serving RAF Police commanded by Flight Lieutenant James Collo, OC RAF Police at RAF Cosford and RAF Shawbury. The salute was taken by the new Air Officer RAF Police and Association President, Air Commodore Frank Clifford OBE RAF. The PM's new Warrant Officer, WO Franklyn Green, accompanied the AO.

The service was conducted by the Reverend Jeremy (Jez) Safford and included the names of those former RAF Police whose names have been carved this year on pavers around the memorial:

Kevin Peter HALL;
David Mark ALLEN;
Ian CLEPHANE;
John BEASTON;
John BLAYALL;
Geof GILBERTSON;
Stephen SILVER;
Paul FLANAGAN;
David BROOKMAN;
Colin DAVIES;
Harry HARRIS;
Philip LAMLE;
David HILL;
George STANNETT;
Jack LANE;
Alec BEANGE;
Tony HART;
George MURGATROYD;
Martin HAY;
Bill WILLIAMS;
Ray SIMPSON;
Tom H JACKSON;
Derek HODGKINSON.

The official wreaths were laid by the President and Chairman.

After the Standards were marched off, members and guests very slowly made their way via other memorials, back to the marquee for afternoon tea. Short speeches were made by the AO and Chairman David Budd.

This was the ninth anniversary service and (as usual) was in part emotional, part happy and to be remembered by all present. Credit goes to the working memorial committee of Bernard Lamb, Brian Whitaker and Philip Fitchett.

John Walton

From [John Curtis](#)

From [Ken Turner](#)

A selection of other [photographs](#)